

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE

North Head, Grand Manan, N. B.
April 14, 1934.

Dear Highway Readers:

I am constrained to relay to you an S. O. S. that has just arrived from Africa. It states that this has been a "bad year," meaning many deaths from malaria. Also horse-sickness is much worse such a year—three having died on Balmoral. In addition Flu has claimed its toll of victims, while a scourge of Measles has reaped its grim harvest of little ones. Again it has been a year outstanding in child-birth fatalities. Even reaching the nearest European neighbour to our Mission station, the Smiths. The young wife has suddenly gone on leaving an infant son as the only comfort of his inconsolable father. Neglect is the altar upon which she and many of the others have been sacrificed—not willingly but through ignorance "Hadst thou been here," is what comes to me as the unuttered heart-cry from this long list of sorrow-stricken mourners; "Hadst thou been here, our brother," mother, wife, child, "had not died." "Unuttered" did I say? The Macedonian cry has been twice repeated by the Natives of our district. The first cry was three years ago. It said, "We will sell our cattle and goats and pay one passage out." The second petition to our Mission Board, came this year: "We will pay two passages out." These messages were from, not only our Native workers and Christians, but from the heathen head-men and their Chief.

And yet when our North Head Church accepted our resignation, we sent word to Brother Dow that we were "open for a call". This was because we were sure God would reveal to us His will when His time was fully come for our return. The night of the 10th, the Divine message came with unmistakable clearness. The next post four letters went out to Mission Board members, one to cancel our announcement that we are open for a call to take a church in the Homeland.

This matter concerns every Highway reader. Our African need is greater than we can picture. Faith says "the going is hard," pain and weakness have been her constant companions since her last hospital experience.

Our brave Sterritt Sisters are bearing up under a heart-breaking burden: Their faithful native evangelist, Isiah, is at death's door.

The African situation for which we, as a denomination, are responsible, reminds me of "Lazarus" the helpless, suffering beggar. But he was at the gate of a "certain rich man," content to receive but the crumbs that fell from that table. We are that "rich man"—our duty is clear. Let us not only pray, but say, "Here am I Lord, awaiting thy word of instruction."

The 13th instant brought this S. O. S., from our African Mission, but His wireless message reached us the 10th—God's providence always dovetail. So if our Mission funds are low, He has His chosen ones who will arise and gladly sacrifice, giving over and above their regular offering, until the need is supplied, and Lazarus properly cared for.

Yours in the will of God.

H. C. SANDERS.

Natal, South Africa,
March 13, 1934

To The King's Highway:
Greetings.

Although exceedingly tired, I am going to write a few lines tonight to greet you all. I trust God is blessing you in the Homeland. We are having fine meetings and a good spirit manifested in all the work of the Lord.

Our quarterly meetings are over. They were

well attended. Big Sunday was a fine day. Five were baptized here and received into the church. The altar service was a splendid one, about one hundred seeking God for special need. There has been a number of our workers sick, besides many others with malaria and measles. A few cases of poison which meant many calls on time, strength and medicine.

The Big Sunday at Altona was well attended and a time of blessing. Many at the altar and deep conviction upon the people. Some very inspiring testimonies and exhortations were given. The blessing of God is manifested in all the work and although some are sick and unable to attend God is blessing and undertaking. We have much to encourage ourselves in the Lord. The calls for **visitation of sick and needy** have been many. We have had quite a number of deaths in this district of (white and black), Malaria taking some, pneumonia and measles other. This has served to soften the hearts of some and cause them to seek God.

Many days we hardly knew how we could face the duty of the day (but, God undertakes) and so far we have been enabled to carry on. To Him be all the glory. We are glad to be here in His will. We are trusting Him for the needed strength and means to carry on this work.

We have not mentioned the calls for food, clothing, etc., before, but I feel to call for special prayer that we may have money to carry on this work. So far since coming to Africa we have had to feed the hungry, clothe the poor and needy, supply medicine for the sick and do all that we could to help the poor needy people. Our people in the Homeland know very little of the folks that are ever at the door of the missionary and if he does not help him now how can he bring the message of Christ to him. Our Missionary Board can supply you with any information as to needs etc., and if the Lord lays it upon any of you my reader to send money to help in buying medicine and in school work, I am quite sure they will give you the desired information through the Highway. We are not asking you to withdraw your support from what you are doing but if you have money which you can send for God's glory send it in to the treasurer, Rev. L. T. Sabine. I am sure he will see that we get it and God will bless you for doing what you can to hold up the hands of your missionaries and enable them to carry on the work of the Lord as it should be carried on. We wish to thank all who have helped in this cause during the past but earnestly plead with you to do your best now. We are fully satisfied that the Board can point out the needs that are so pressing to any who may inquire. May the Lord bless you in your praying and feeling grateful for all that has been done, but looking forward for further help in this cause.

Sincerely,

D. M. MacDONALD

GRUESOME FIND NEAR HARRISMITH

(From Our Own Correspondent)

Harrismith, March 14—Some time ago a Native boy named Polda Masebuko disappeared from his home near Oliviers Hoek and an intensive search failed to trace him.

Yesterday his body was found in a stream of water. The ears were both missing, certain other portions of the body appeared to have been severed, and on the shoulders and lower part of the back were regular cuts which appeared to have been made with a knife.

The police are investigating the matter.

(This is one of the many such cases of cruel murder for the purpose of obtaining "Muti" or "medicine.")

FAITH MacDONALD

Natal, South Africa,
March 15, 1934

Dear Homeland Friends:

I am sorry to have written so few Highway letters lately, but we are short-handed and my strength has not come back yet, so letter writing is almost impossible. The Harvest truly is great. On every hand opportunities beckon and avenues of service open up, but we have not the capital in time, strength or workers to "buy up" more than perhaps one quarter of the possible chances to reach and help souls. In our hearts burn the words of the Master, "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the Harvest that He would send forth laborers into the Harvest"—Our hearts continually bear this prayer before the throne.

The dark shadow of the Great Reaper has cast a gloom upon nearly all hearts in our districts. Measles with gastric complications have in more than one small community taken twenty little ones in one week, a deadly type of gastric flu has claimed old and young in alarming numbers. Many have been drowned in flooded rivers, and now we hear reports of an early malaria season claiming victims already. There have been many other sad deaths; one, our nearest white neighbour, a young mother, leaving a little son only two weeks old. Johan Kunene and Aaron Mkonza were both sick during quarterly and you will hear in other letters of Isaiah Sangwenis' still very critical illness. Alfred Netula is still weak from a very close call in January and February.

To the Zulu no death is natural save that of the very old who "Goduka" or 'go home'. All other deaths and serious illness are attributed to witchcraft. Those white people whose knowledge of these children of the night is superficial, discount these fears entirely, putting them all down to superstition and ignorance. But those who in long years among them have by love, deep interest and sympathy won their confidence, know better. Looking through the open door of their heart-story (wrung by sorrow and pain from their lips) we begin to discern in the murk and gloom of pure superstition sinister forms of reality. As the evidence piles up we are forced to the conclusion that their fears are not altogether groundless. Their danger is very real, and during the last few years these dangers have grown to alarming proportions.

In the old days they had their witch-doctors, and their herb-doctors. The witch-doctor acted in the capacity of a spiritualistic medium, pointing out the "Mtakati" (bewitcher, poisoner or murderer) who was killing them and often telling them what to do or what herb-doctor to go to. The herb-doctor had a wonderful knowledge of herbs, animals and medicine and often wrought amazing cures. The witch-doctor professed to be, and often was unmistakably demon-possessed, and working under demon power could often do wonderful things. The herb-doctors had little or nothing to do with demons.

I believe it was late in the year 1923 that we had first brought to our notice a great wave of demon possession coming "up from the sea", sweeping up this way from the Zululand coast. We have often written and spoken of these "Izizwe, Bafekezeli, or Moya wabafana" (nations, or spirits of the boys) as they are called. They simply covered the country, and I suppose about fifty per cent of the population were possessed or oppressed by these demons. Their torment and effect was fearful, and we know of many deaths and many wrecked lives and many who fell deep into sin through this agency.

I have told you of the terror first inspired in the hearts of even our Christian workers when faced with this awful foe. Also of the wonderful victories God gave, the mighty revival which